



# Legislative Update

**Dr. Scott J. Porter**

**Deputy Director, Military & Government Relations**



# Why We Exist

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## AFSA Preamble

With reverence for God and Country and being ever mindful of the glorious traditions of the United States Air Force, our duty to uphold and defend the Constitution of the United States of America, our responsibility **to aid in maintaining superior aerospace defense** for our beloved country, our desire **to assist in obtaining the highest caliber of men and women** for our Air Force, our interest in **the welfare of persons who served and are serving** in the Air Force, our devotion to our fellow airmen in fortune or distress, and our reverence for the memory of our departed airmen, we unite **to further the aims and objectives of this association.**



# Military & Government Relations

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## AFSA's Military-Government Mission

**A**dvocate

**C**ommunicate

**E**ducate





# 114<sup>th</sup> Congress

**U.S. HOUSE – 435 VOTING MEMBERS, 6 NON-VOTING, BASED ON POPULATION**



**U.S. SENATE – 100 VOTING MEMBERS, 2 PER STATE**

**NUMBERED CONGRESSES LAST TWO YEARS. ALL PUBLIC LAWS SIGNED DURING THAT CONGRESS BEGIN WITH THAT NUMBER. FOR EXAMPLE: PUBLIC LAW 114-1, PUBLIC LAW 114-2, ETC.**

**WHILE THE LEGISLATIVE PROCESS SOUNDS SIMPLE, IT IS ALWAYS POLITICALLY INFLUENCED, AND 535 ELECTED OFFICIALS ARE DRIVEN BY PERSONAL OPINIONS, DIFFERENT LEVELS OF EXPERIENCE, AND OUTSIDE FORCES.**

**18 PERCENT OF THE MEMBERS OF THE 114<sup>TH</sup> CONGRESS ARE MILITARY VETERANS. THEREFORE, A MAJOR AFSA MISSION IS TO EDUCATE THE OTHER 82 PERCENT!**



# Source of Benefits & Entitlements

QOL Benefits are Created and Enhanced by Changes in Public Law via US Codes

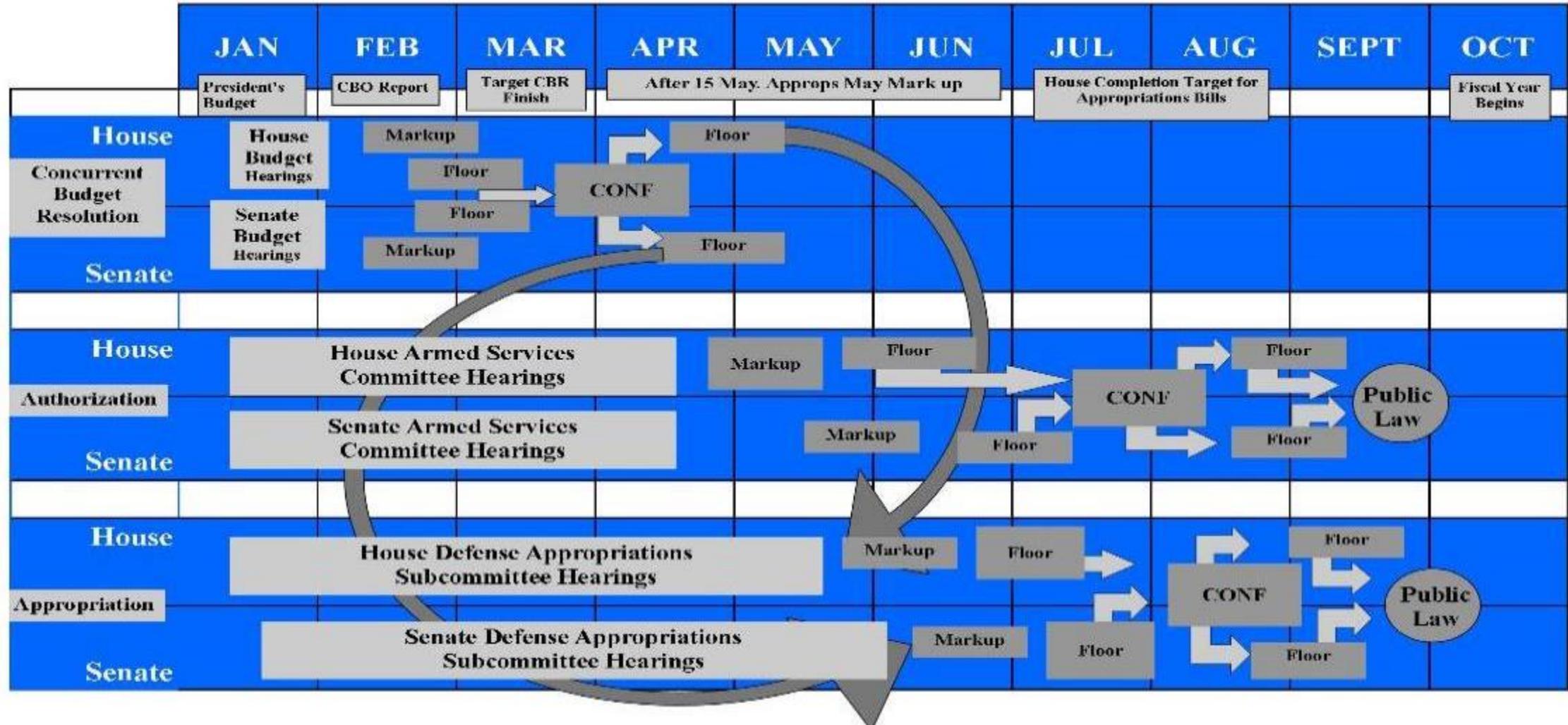
**TITLE 10 = ARMED FORCES**

**TITLE 32 = NATIONAL GUARD**

**TITLE 37 = PAY & ALLOWANCES**

**TITLE 38 = VETERANS AFFAIRS**

- DoD Does Not Initiate QOL Programs.
- DoD Rarely Addresses QOL Programs, Except to Cut Their Budgets.
- Congressional Legislation is Required.
- Congress Asks What You Want to Change.
- Most QOL Changes During Your Career Begin with YOU



*Serving the Total Force Enlisted Corps and Their Families – Past, Present, & Future*



**LACK OF KNOWLEDGE,  
UNDERSTANDING, AND  
ACCOUNTABILITY**



**IMPROPER FOCUS**



**GETTING LAWMAKERS TO UNDERSTAND ALL  
ELEMENTS OF A PROBLEM AND THE IMPACT  
AND CONSEQUENCES OF THEIR DECISIONS.**



**INERTIA**



# FY 2016 Proposal

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- **A 1.3 % raise, instead of the 2.3 % pay raise mandated by law (+4 years)**
- **A 5 % increase in out-of-pocket housing expenses**
- **Continued erosion of the \$1B commissary subsidy (- 66%)**
- **Consolidation of TRICARE's Prime, Standard, and Extra; working-age retirees will pay for service in MTFs, absorb the Prime enrollment fee, and pay standard copayments and deductibles**
- **Increase pharmacy copays**
- **Establish an ER use fee**
- **Establish a means-tested, TRICARE For Life enrollment fee**

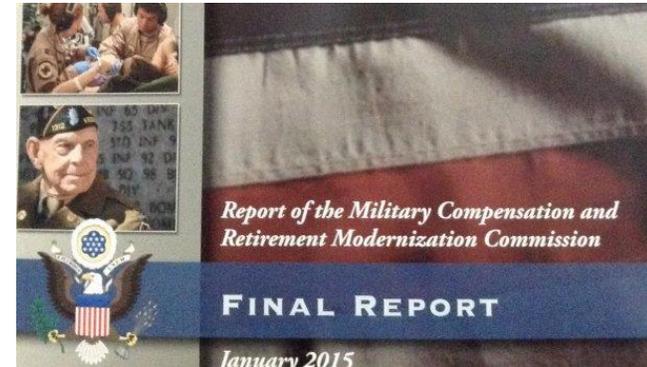


# Other Factors

## Sequestration



## MCRMC



## Fiscal Hawks vs. Defense Hawks



# Chances for Success in 2015

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- **Mitigate higher TRICARE fees**
- **Block reductions in BAH**
- **Full military pay raise?**
- **Limit reductions in Commissary funding**
- **Veterans Status**
- **Credentialing**
- **VA Care for female Veterans**
- **Homeless Veterans**



# Questions?



# 2014 Major Accomplishments

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- Restored full COLA for majority of retirees
- Blocked most of DoD's requested health care fee increases/changes
- Blunted BAH cut for service members
- Preserved Commissary funding
- Secured In-state tuition rates (effective July 1, 2015)\*
- Secured VA advanced appropriations to protect disability, pension, survivor, and GI Bill programs
- Acquired all 50 states' ratification of MIC3\*

*\* Long-standing Association Goals*



# Communications

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- **Webpage**
- **Op Eds & Responses**
- **Headline Roundup & Washington Report**
- **Legislative Alerts & Calls to Acton**
- **Surveys**
- **Legislative Action Center**



# AFSA Members Helping Advocate



**VOTERVOICE ALERT LETTERS. THROUGH 31 MARCH, AFSA MEMBERS HAD SENT OVER 30,000 LETTERS TO CONGRESS AND GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS. THIS IS A VERY EFFICIENT, EFFECTIVE WAY TO COMPLEMENT THE WORK OUR AFSA HEADQUARTERS LOBBYING TEAM DOES ON THE HILL.**

**GO TO THE LEGISLATIVE ACTION CENTER ON THE AFSA WEBSITE (HQAFSA.ORG) TO ACCESS NUMEROUS ISSUE LETTERS TO SEND TO CONGRESS. JUST A FEW OF THE CURRENT LETTERS THERE FOR YOU:**

- **STOPPING FURTHER CUTS TO MILITARY BENEFITS**
- **REPEALING THE UNFAIR MILITARY DIVORCE LAW**
- **SUPPORTING MILITARY SURVIVORS**
- **GIVING GUARD AND RESERVE MEMBERS VETERAN STATUS**
- **VA REFORM**
- **IMPROVING THE GI BILL**
- **CONCURRENT RECEIPT OF RETIREMENT PAY AND VA DISABILITY COMPENSATION**



**[www.hqafsa.org](http://www.hqafsa.org)**



**Air Force Sergeants Association**



**@AFSAHQ**



**air\_force\_sgts\_assn**

**AFSA Headquarters: (301) 899-3500 or 1-800-638-0594**

**Web: <http://www.hqafsa.org>**

**Me: [sporter@hqafsa.org](mailto:sporter@hqafsa.org)**